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# Town Meeting



*Bulletin* OF AMERICA'S  
TOWN MEETING OF THE AIR  
*Sponsored by* THE READER'S DIGEST

## Who Should Control the Atomic Bomb?

*Moderator,* GEORGE V. DENNY, JR.

### *Speakers*

RAYMOND SWING  
HANSON BALDWIN

OWEN BREWSTER  
EDWARD R. MURROW

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COMING OCTOBER 4th

Is the Full Employment Bill a Threat  
to Private Industry?

TUNE IN EVERY THURSDAY, AMERICAN BROADCASTING COMPANY—8:30 p.m., E.W.T.



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## THE BROADCAST OF SEPTEMBER 20:

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## THE BROADCAST OF SEPTEMBER 27:

### "How Can We Make a Lasting Peace With Japan?"

## THE BROADCAST OF OCTOBER 4:

### "Is the Full Employment Bill a Threat to Private Industry?"

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# Town Meeting

Bulletin of America's Town Meeting of the Air



George V. Denny, Jr., Moderator

## Who Should Control the Atomic Bomb?

### Announcer:

*The Reader's Digest*, America's most widely read magazine, welcomes you to another stirring session of America's Town Meeting, the program that gives you both sides of issues affecting your life and mine. Tonight, back home at Town Hall in New York City, four authorities clash over an issue that may decide your safety and the preservation of our civilization. Now to open this important session, *The Reader's Digest* brings you the president of Town Hall, founder and moderator of America's Town Meeting, Mr. George V. Denny, Jr. Mr. Denny. (*Applause.*)

### Moderator Denny:

Good evening, neighbors. Look at that hand of yours. No, I'm not joking. This is serious business. Are you looking at it? It's the most powerful hand in all of human history. The cave man found that he could increase its

power with the aid of a club—the kind of thing the Irish call a shillelagh. Later, man began to use spears and other pointed weapons. Then he found he could increase his power tremendously by throwing a stone with a slingshot. Remember how David killed Goliath?

It wasn't until the fourteenth century, however, that man learned how to hurl missiles at his enemies with the aid of gunpowder. But he had to use his hands and a weapon in the process. As the human hand has become more powerful, it's become more destructive.

Let's not forget that it was a human hand, the hand of Major Tom Ferebee of North Carolina, that dropped the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima and wiped out a city of 126,000 people at one blow.

Yes, that's the most powerful hand in all of human history. It was through the integrity of men of science, searching for truth, using their brains honestly, that



we found out how to magnify the power of the hand so tremendously, for the hand is the faithful servant of the brain that directs it.

Now the question is, can we apply our minds with equal honesty in determining how to use this power? It'll take the best and most courageous thinking on the part of each one of us if we are to prevent this gigantic power, now in the human hand, from being used to enslave or destroy us. So we've asked four thoughtful men of wide influence to lead our discussion this evening—a United States Senator, the Honorable Owen Brewster of the State of Maine; the military editor of the *New York Times*, Mr. Hanson Baldwin, and two distinguished news analysts, Raymond Swing, who's heard regularly over most of these stations at 7:15, Eastern Peace Time, and Edward R. Murrow, who only last Thursday returned to this country from his post in Europe where he's the European representative of the Columbia Broadcasting System.

Now we're going to hear first from this man whose voice customarily begins, "This is London." But, no, this is New York and this is Ed Murrow speaking. Ed Murrow. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Murrow:**

A few weeks ago I was walking through the ruins of Berlin—the cinders of a civilization. Any one who has seen the damage done by

a bombing in the pre-atomic age must recognize that humans have now developed a method of destroying humanity. Perhaps that's unimportant, but at least it's worth mentioning.

I do not believe that this discussion is really about the atomic bomb. It is about the control of aggressor nations.

The atom bomb is an offensive weapon. We, in this country, are at something of a disadvantage when it comes to discussing its control, for we have not been bombed, even by old-fashioned, obsolete methods. Nothing is better calculated to lend urgency to a discussion of the control of bombing than a few near misses. I have not yet discovered anyone who can draw a moral distinction between a whole lot of little bombs and one big one.

We did not, in my opinion, lose the moral leadership of the world when we engaged in area bombing in Europe or when we used the atom bomb.

The whole purpose of bombing is to destroy the enemy's will to resist and his ability to resist. That is an understandable military objective, and it involves the killing and wounding of a lot of civilians, whatever kind of bomb is employed.

I would like to suggest that we make certain assumptions regarding the control of the atomic bomb. The first is that since

the bomb has been used, it will be used, if there is another war. The second assumption is that whatever precautions we may take, this weapon will, with immeasurable time, be available to other nations. Research, and perhaps espionage, will make it available to them.

We cannot retain control of this bomb, not even with Senator Brewster's help. If we attempt to do so, even for a short span of years, we shall face the prospect of anonymous annihilation. We may be persuaded that no American government would ever abuse this terrifying power; that it would only be used in the defense of righteousness and justice. Other nations will not share that view, and they will make every effort to produce the bomb and they will succeed.

At this moment, our representatives engaged in negotiations may enjoy a temporary advantage, because everyone knows they have that bomb in their pocket. But the time will surely come when other negotiators sitting around the table will also have a pocketful.

The real problem that confronts us is this—what are we prepared to do to avoid the necessity of having to use this bomb again and to prevent its being used against us?

The great powers must sacrifice their right of veto in the United

Nations Organization. That represents a great sacrifice of sovereignty. It can be argued that the existing international organization has not the authority to exercise control over the atomic bomb, I agree. But the bomb, like the bomber on the battleship, is an instrument of national policy. We cannot reduce the power of the bomb or put it back into the brilliant minds from which it came.

We cannot keep it secret, therefore, we must, for our very lives, strengthen the Security Council. It would not involve common citizenship, common currency, language, or the free movement of populations. It would not mean that a lot of foreigners would be telling us how to run our country. It would mean that in our relations with other nations we would submit to the decisions of a representative international body. We would give up our freedom of action when it comes to making war.

We now have an opportunity, perhaps only a fleeting one, to provide the world with a leadership for which it is longing. The atom bomb has not altered the fundamental problem. It has merely lent new urgency, jarred some of us, though perhaps not Senator Brewster, into a realization that a continuation of complete sovereignty is not compatible with the survival of civilization.



I do not advocate the immediate broadcasting of the details of the bomb's construction, although that would probably have no fatal consequences. But I do say that we are now in a position to summon the nations for urgent reconsideration of the sacrifices they are prepared to make to prevent the future use of this weapon.

I have not seen the results of the atom bomb, but have had some personal experience of bombing and being bombed by methods that are now obsolete.

We, in this country, have mercifully been spared that experience. Those who had it, are inclined to believe that no sacrifice is too great if it will prevent a repetition on a more massive scale.

This is a great nation. I have seen its power thrown around the world. But we must live with the world; we cannot dominate it. Other nations are already at work on the development of this weapon. They have the resources.

Think what our action would be if another nation had this secret and we had not. The competition is already beginning. If it continues, no one can win it. We are faced with an opportunity which may not recur, and if we fail, retribution will not limp. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Ed Murrow. Now you certainly have needled our next speaker, Ed. But I expect he's going to give you about as good

as you've sent. He is a member of the Naval Affairs Committee in the United States Senate and also one of the newly-appointed members of the Pearl Harbor Investigating Committee. I take pleasure in presenting to you the Honorable Owen Brewster, Senator from the State of Maine. Senator Brewster. (*Applause.*)

**Senator Brewster:**

I think I ought to wear a placard, "UNFAIR TO THE SENATE," in putting me in competition with one of the most persuasive and best-loved voices upon the air.

I quite agree with Mr. Murrow that the atomic bomb has opened the Pandora's box, but I do not agree, if I may mix my metaphors, that we should jump out of the frying pan of our present predicament into the fire of sacrificing our sovereignty to some super-state.

I might agree that we have the "bear by the tail," but are not prepared to let him go without knowing where he is going to go, because up in Maine we are rather cautious about bears. (*Laughter.*)

In New England the classic story concerns the Secretary of the Navy, from a typical prairie state, visiting the Brooklyn Navy Yard for the first time, and on boarding a ship, exclaiming in supposed amazement, "Why, the darn thing is hollow!" (*Laughter.*)

It is with somewhat similar innocence and humility that one ap-

proaches the atomic bomb. Jules Verne is a piker before the implications of this Frankenstein.

A responsible scientist pictures an innocent-appearing suitcase in a hotel room here at Broadway and 42nd Street, under the impulsion of a radio wave from anywhere you please, suddenly accomplishing the disintegration of this great city in which we meet with all its millions of inhabitants. Even your present dynamic Mayor LaGuardia might be helpless before such a force. (*Laughter.*)

This discussion assumes the present head start of the United States in this discovery, and priority in its development and control, and also in counter measures for protection against its destructive possibilities.

The United States might well rest its claim upon the right of conquest, exactly as the continents have belonged, under international law, to those who first established possession. The United States, however, may much more appropriately in this day and generation rest its claim not merely upon the right of discovery, but upon the far more solemn ground of the pledge by President Truman, to use this elemental force of nature only for the welfare of mankind.

As humanity emerges by slow degrees from the jungle, America stands out as a "trustee" in this century of potential "Peace On Earth"—with American industrial

might reaching culmination in the creation of the atomic bomb.

Cynics may compare this concept of America to the "Kultur of the Kaiser" and the delusion of a master race. But the reality remains that peace-loving people everywhere look to America for the salvation of the world from the dread forces of destruction that so recently threatened disaster to all alike.

Without disparagement of our great Allies and their tremendous contribution to our common cause, it is yet evident and generally agreed that the unique geographical location of the United States, plus our vast industrial development, made the indispensable contribution to the total victory we have achieved. (*Applause.*)

The continuing cultivation of our unique resources is equally essential to keep the victory won. We have created a \$2,000,000,000 dynamo. We have developed a winning team of scientists. The momentum of this machine must not be lost as we move from the muskets of 1776 to the modern machine gun in the development of atomic energy.

Without blinking our eyes at certain blemishes in our past, no great nation on earth has a better record of peaceful development to justify a custodianship of this developing device for the good of all mankind. This is not nationalistic drivel, but simple fact.



This challenges in no way the historic development of other great nations, but recognizes rather the unique opportunity afforded us in this hemisphere for a comparatively peaceful expansion until we have made of this continent the productive model, and less happily, perhaps, the envy of all the earth.

I am not afraid of a "Pax Americana," with the emphasis on the "pax." Pending the maturing of a world organization and the demonstration of its capacity to conserve the peace, no consideration can properly be given to turning over this perhaps priceless secret to any other group since this discovery may spell life or death, not only for America, but for civilization itself, as it has been slowly and painfully evolved upon this earth by the sacrifices of the generations who have left to us this priceless heritage. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Senator Brewster. Now we hear the familiar voice of another distinguished commentator, the chairman of the Council for Democracy and the celebrated American Broadcasting Company news analyst, Raymond Swing, speaking to us from Washington. Mr. Swing. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Swing:**

I shall start with a word about the theme that the United States

lost its moral leadership in using the atomic bomb in the war. My gifted friend Ed Murrow thinks not. He sees no moral difference between killing civilians on a vast scale and killing them on a scale not so vast. I think he's right.

But, right or wrong, few, I believe, can deny that we can forfeit the moral leadership of the world by the way we handle the atomic bomb from now on. At present we say, and Senator Brewster has said it tonight, that we're keeping the secret of the bomb to ourselves as trustees in the cause of peace.

Now that word "trustees" is most carelessly used in this context. A trustee is someone appointed to hold something belonging to someone else and to administer it for someone else, being responsible for his administration to the authority who appointed him. A petson can't be self-appointed as trustee responsible only to himself.

We may have the best of intentions, but we're not trustees, and to say that we are hides from ourselves, though not from anyone else, that we are thinking of our own safety. We think we shall not endanger other countries, and we shall be much safer if we keep other countries from having the atomic bomb.

If this belief of ours were shared by other countries — other than Britain and Canada, who are sup-



posed to share the secret of the bomb with us—our course would not create fear in the world. It would create a feeling of security.

But in the nature of things, the other countries will feel weaker and will try to make themselves stronger, first, by finding the secret of the bomb themselves, which all countries with scientific equipment are doing just as fast as they know how, or by making other terrible weapons, or by combining against us, or as it's called—counterbalancing us.

So the exclusive possession of the secret of the bomb is an inducement to rivalry and the stimulant of fear. Whatever we say about promoting the peace of the world, we're not promoting world peace, but the "Pax Americana," a peace which we dominate so long as we are powerful enough to have our way. That is no more moral leadership than a super-dreadnaught is moral in overshadowing a cruiser. Nor is it in the American tradition.

It would be in our tradition to take the truly moral leadership, and that we can only do if we lead with a moral principle. Instead of using the atomic secret in a way to inspire fear, we should use it to inspire trust. We should use it to build, not to dismay.

It is my contention that no sovereign nation should have the exclusive or the shared use of the atomic bomb (*applause*), for all

sovereign nations are potential rivals and in a world of unlimited sovereignty, war cannot be abolished. So long as the possibility of war exists, the possibility exists that a large part of the human race, and certainly all of civilization will be destroyed by the weapons of the next organized carnage.

So in line with Mr. Murrow's thought, I advocate that we take what would be the greatest step in moral leadership in our history. We should announce our earnest desire to limit our own sovereignty in all matters of security by committing our security to a greatly strengthened United Nations Organization (*applause*) on the condition that the other nations of the world join us and similarly limit their sovereignty.

We should announce that we shall take this earliest step to call a conference to organize the United Nations to exercise this sovereignty, and that if and when it is achieved, we shall turn over to the Council the secret of the bomb with the exclusive right to use it and to use all other weapons of war.

Only by creating such a world government with full authority to maintain security for all nations can mankind hope to avert another war and so to survive the release of atomic energy and the perfection of guided missiles. To propose this would be assuming

a moral leadership of grandeur equal to—yes, greater than—our technical, engineering, and scientific leadership. It is the one true hope of survival for ourselves and the civilized world. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Raymond Swing. Our next speaker is a graduate of Annapolis, served in the Navy for three and a half years, and since that time has been a student of military and naval science. I take pleasure in presenting at this time the military editor of *New York Times*, Mr. Hanson Baldwin. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Baldwin:**

It is all very well tonight to talk as Mr. Swing has about what should be done with the atomic bomb. But some of the suggestions that have been advanced since the bombing of Hiroshima are out of this world. They remind me of epitaphs on grave-stones and of the wry remark of a man who had just wandered through a cemetery and had read many of those laudatory inscriptions. "I can't help wondering," he said, "where all the sinners are buried." (*Laughter.*)

I can't help stressing, therefore, that blueprints of the millennium are pretty, Mr. Swing, but meaningless. The truth is, of course, that man's progress in the technological and material fields has far

outstripped his political and spiritual developments. (*Applause.*)

When we talk about what should be done with the atomic bomb, we ought to keep closely keyed to the reality of what can be done about it within the framework of our present political, economic, educational, and moral developments. There must be certain guideposts, facts, assumptions, and premises to the practical action we can take.

Let me try to outline a few of those:

First, the atomic bomb, though it makes the waging of war far more devastating and horrible than ever before, does not spell the end of man or of civilization. What is to be feared from the atomic bomb is not the annihilation of man but his degradation; not the end of civilization but a reversion to the Dark Ages—the Dark Ages of tyranny and mental and physical poverty.

Second, sooner or later, other great powers will discover the secret of manufacture of the atomic bomb, whether we give it to them or not.

Third, in time the great powers will evolve some system of defense against atomic explosives, even though partial and incomplete.

Fourth, the very potential of the atomic bomb and long distance rockets might be an attraction to unscrupulous men avid for power.



Fifth, it follows that the atomic bomb per se is not necessarily a factor for peace.

Sixth, the problem of control of the atomic bomb cannot be separated from the problem of the development of atomic energy for industrial purposes. If nations are to be allowed to manufacture plutonium and uranium for peacetime use, it would be easy to conceal and difficult to prevent, by any system of international inspection, the final step—the use of plutonium and uranium for war purposes.

Seven, no international organization yet exists to which control of the atomic bomb and atomic energy development could be entrusted. Even when the United Nations Charter has been ratified by the participating nations, the resulting organization will not be of sufficient strength or maturity, as things stand now, to handle the awful responsibility of such power. You do not give a stick of dynamite to a baby.

Technical strength and military power cannot be entrusted to political and economic weakness. (*Applause.*) One need only glance at today's headlines to understand the weakness of the United Nations Organization. It is, plainly, not united. We lend lip service to internationalism but we still think and act in terms of nationalism. Nor can we do otherwise until the peoples of the world

through the slow process of education think in international terms.

I fully agree with Mr. Swing that the abandonment of nationalism and the sacrifice of sovereignty is the eventual hope of the world, but I feel very sure that the world is not educated to any such step today.

My conclusion is, therefore, that for the time being the United States must retain control of the secrets of the atomic bomb and of its manufacture. (*Applause.*) I say this in the full knowledge that perhaps in three to five years, maybe more and maybe less, other great powers will discover these secrets whether we give it to them or not. But those years are years which must be wisely used.

Keep control of the atomic bomb at home for the time being, but work immediately to strengthen the United Nations Charter and to make the United Nations Organization a going concern.

Propose the international abolition of conscription and international limitation upon armaments. Abolish the veto power and the Security Council of the United Nations Organization which now make it impossible to prevent great wars.

Propose an international agreement which would outlaw the use of atomic explosives in war except in retaliation.

Broaden the police functions and military strength of the United

## THE SPEAKERS' COLUMN

**HANSON BALDWIN**—Mr. Baldwin has been a newspaperman since 1928 when he became first police reporter and then general assignment reporter for the *Baltimore Sun*. He became associated with the *New York Times* in 1929, and he has been military and naval correspondent for this paper since 1937. Mr. Baldwin was graduated from the United States Naval Academy in 1924. In the same year he was commissioned as an ensign in the United States Navy and then was advanced to the rank of lieutenant (j.g.). He served aboard battleships and a destroyer until 1927. Mr. Baldwin is author of *The Caissons Roll—A Military Survey of Europe*, *Admiral Death*, *What the Citizen Should Know About the Navy*, and *United We Stand!*

**EDWARD ROSCOE MURROW** — "This is London." These words of Edward R. Murrow have become familiar to regular radio news listeners over the past few years. As head of the European Bureau of the Columbia Broadcasting System, Mr. Murrow continued to send his newscasts at times when bombing threatened to put him off the air.

Mr. Murrow was born in Greensboro, North Carolina, 41 years ago, but he was raised in the Northwest. He worked as compassman and topographer for timber cruisers in Washington State, and was graduated from Washington State College in 1930. After his graduation he served as president of the National Student Federation for two years and during this time spoke at more than 300 American colleges and universities. Much of his polished speaking style was acquired during this period.

From 1932 to 1935, Mr. Murrow was assistant director of the Institute of International Education, an organization financed by the Carnegie and Rockefeller Foundations. Mr. Murrow had charge of the foreign offices. In 1935, he joined the Columbia Broadcasting System to be in charge of talks and educational programs in Europe. In this capacity he traveled widely in Europe arranging broadcasts of folk festivals, important speeches, ceremonies, and the like, and with the outbreak of war became one of the outstanding news broadcasters. Many of his broadcasts were compiled in a book entitled, *This Is London*.

**RAYMOND SWING**—Blue Network Commentator Raymond Swing, was born in Cortlandt, New York, in 1887. He attended Oberlin College and Conservatory of Music and has degrees from Oberlin,

Olivet, Williams, Muhlenberg, Lafayette, and Harvard. Mr. Swing began a newspaper career in Cleveland and later worked on papers in Orrville, Ohio; Richmond, Indiana; Indianapolis, Indiana, and Cincinnati, Ohio. From 1913 to 1917, he was Berlin correspondent for the *Chicago Daily News*. In 1918, he became an examiner for the War Labor Board but returned to Germany in 1919 to become Berlin correspondent for the *New York Herald*. The foreign service of the *Wall Street Journal* engaged his time from 1922 to 1924. Then he became London correspondent for the *Philadelphia Public Ledger* and the *New York Evening Post*, a position he held until 1934.

From 1934 to 1936, Mr. Swing was a member of the board of editors of *The Nation*. Then he reversed his usual procedure and became New York correspondent for the *London News Chronicle*. In 1935 he became a news commentator on American affairs for the British Broadcasting System, and on foreign affairs for the American School of the Air. For several years he was commentator on foreign affairs for the Mutual Broadcasting System and since 1942 has been with the Blue Network.

Mr. Swing is the author of *Forerunners of American Fascism*, *How War Came*, and *Preview of History*. He is also a contributor to both English and American magazines.

**RALPH OWEN BREWSTER** — Republican Senator from Maine, Owen Brewster was born in Dexter, Maine. He received an A.B. degree from Bowdoin College, an LL.B. degree from Harvard, and an LL.D. from the University of Maine. He is a member of the American and Maine bar associations. He has been a member of the Maine House of Representatives (1917-19, 1921-23) and the Maine Senate (1923-25), and was Governor of Maine for two terms (1925-29). As a Republican Representative from Maine, he served in the 74th to 76th United States Congresses (1935-41). Currently, he is a Senator for the term ending 1947.

During World War I, Senator Brewster was a member of the Maine National Guard, advancing to captain and regimental adjutant. He entered the Officers' Training School at Camp Zachary Taylor, and continued there until after the Armistice was signed.

In 1943, he was a member of the committee of five Senators, making a global flight representing the Truman Committee to investigate the war program.



Nations Organization. Set up under its authority an international atomic energy control commission, and then, but not until then, transmit the secret of the atomic bomb to the United Nations.

I submit, ladies and gentlemen, our real problem is not the control of the atomic bomb. It is control of power in itself and of the nature of man. (*Applause.*)

**Moderator Denny:**

Thank you, Hanson Baldwin. Now will you gentlemen step up here around the microphone, please. We've come to the point where there's got to be a little give and take. Ed Murrow, we haven't heard from you for a long time. Here's your chance to get back at the Senator if you have any words for him.

**Mr. Murrow:** I was very much impressed by the eloquence of the Senator's remarks—more impressed, perhaps, by his rhetoric than by his logic. (*Laughter and applause.*) I would like to put to him one question. That is, he used the phrase, "If we keep this secret, we will then be in for a period of comparatively peaceful expansion." What is comparative peace? Does that imply only little wars in which we are not engaged at the outset as was the case when this one began? What do you, mean, Senator, by comparative peaceful developments?

**Mr. Denny:** Senator, your words rise up to haunt you.

**Senator Brewster:** Well, fortunately, I put it in the past tense and commented on the development of America through a comparatively peaceful expansion as compared with the 2,000 years of wars that have afflicted Europe and presented us with our present mess. Here in America, we have been comparatively peaceful and offered this example to the world. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you. Mr. Baldwin. Have you a comment?

**Mr. Baldwin:** As I was saying at the end of my talk, it seems to me that the basic problem is, not the control of the atomic energy, but the control of the spirit of man and of power—national and international power. Such control I think can be exercised only by the heart and by the mind and by the spirit. The job ahead is not only one for governments, but it comes down to you and me, to the school, to the church, and to the home. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Mr. Swing in Washington should have a comment on that.

**Mr. Swing:** Yes, I'd like to say something to Hanson Baldwin. He seemed to be chiding me for approaching the millenium very swiftly. During the first part of his talk he didn't get very far toward it and then toward the end he seemed to me to make a fast leap in my direction. He said, let's have an agreement "to outlaw the

use of atomic bombs in war except in retaliation."

Now, obviously if there are to be wars, as that implies, even if the veto power is abolished, the bomb is pretty sure to be used and we are pretty sure to lose our civilization along with every other great power. Then you suggest that police functions and military strength of the United Nations be increased. Now these two ideas don't fit, as I see things. If the United Nations can enforce peace, there need be no wars. There need be only police action to enforce the law.

Now why don't you come all the way to my position and let the complete control of aggressive weapons be handed over to a really United Nations Organization for its exclusive use. If it's the spirit of man that you are afraid of, let me assure you the spirit of man in this world today wants peace. (*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Hanson, he is a very persuasive talker, isn't he?

**Mr. Baldwin:** Yes, I know that from old. There are too many "ifs," however, I think in Mr. Swing's declaration. I wonder if he really believes that all the other nations of the world will turn over to United Nations Organization some of their sovereignty. I predicated the final part of my talk upon the assumption that we would not give the atomic bomb to the United Nations until certain

conditions had been fulfilled, among them the giving up of some of the sovereignty of other nations as well as the sovereignty of the United States. I think that is a most important element. I doubt if even Mr. Swing believes that that will be accomplished quickly.

**Mr. Swing:** Well, I also predicated my final gift of the atomic secret to the World Organization on the predication that everyone else gave up their sovereignty in exactly the same way we do. No one else is going to do it unless we take the lead. We have the bomb. We have to inspire the trust.

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you, Mr. Swing. Mr. Murrow has something to say about sovereignty. I think he ought to get into this point.

**Mr. Murrow:** Well, it wasn't really something about sovereignty, and I realize that this is not a humorous subject that we are discussing. I did want to report probably the most cynical comment that I have heard on this subject which came from a Scots friend of mine a few weeks ago.

He said, "For years I've been convinced that the pigs would inherit the earth. Now, I'm not so sure there will be any pigs left."

It does come down to whether or not nations are prepared to sacrifice their sovereignty. Hanson Baldwin seems to think that we must wait until we reach a period of perfection. Unless we give a



lead, then I think we are doomed.  
(*Applause.*)

**Mr. Denny:** Senator Brewster?

**Senator Brewster:** Well, I don't know about the pigs of which he speaks but the State of Maine contributed 25,000 mice to the New Mexican experiment with the bomb. I haven't heard from the mice yet as to what they think about it.

But Mr. Murrow is departing on a global tour and we shall listen to his voice around the globe, following a trail I took some two years ago. I suspect that when he returns from that tour, after having surveyed the two billion people on this earth who are outside the Anglo-Saxon domain—we are only 10 per cent of it—he's going to believe that, as Mr. Baldwin says, it's going to be quite a long time before we can accomplish this supersovereignty of which our friends so fondly talk.

**Mr. Denny:** Thank you. Now, gentlemen, we have a great Town

Hall audience here which is anxious to get into this discussion, so while you get ready to answer their questions, let's pause briefly for station identification.

**Announcer:** You are listening to America's Town Meeting, the program that gives both sides of questions vitally important to you, sponsored by the most widely read of all magazines, *The Reader's Digest*.

Tonight, Raymond Swing, Edward R. Murrow, Senator Owen Brewster, and Hanson Baldwin are discussing the topic, "Who Should Control the Atomic Bomb?"

For a complete copy of this discussion, including the question period immediately following, send for the Town Meeting Bulletin. Write to Town Hall, New York 18, New York. Enclose ten cents to cover the cost of printing and mailing. Now here again is Mr. Denny.

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## QUESTIONS, PLEASE!

**Mr. Denny:** Now we're ready for the questions from our representative Town Hall audience, and I'll start with a question from the lady in red.

**Lady:** Mr. Murrow. Don't you think that the fact that the United States has the bomb it will prevent another Pearl Harbor?

**Mr. Denny:** Don't you think it

will prevent another Pearl Harbor now that we have the bomb?

**Mr. Murrow:** The bomb is an offensive weapon and had we had many of those bombs available at the time of Pearl Harbor, it would not necessarily have prevented that great disaster. The important thing it seems to me to remember is that so long as that bomb is

controlled by a single nation, it is an offensive weapon. We shall use it, if we use it, entirely on our own judgment and our own responsibility. That seems to me a responsibility which we should, perhaps, not assume and which will not be willingly or enthusiastically granted to us by other nations. (Applause.)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Is there a question for Mr. Swing?

*Man:* I address my question to Mr. Swing. Should we turn over the secret of the bomb's manufacture to the United Nations Organization, what can we expect them to do with it? Would it not be far more practical for us to retain our custodianship while the building of a stronger United Nations Organization is continued?

*Mr. Swing:* He has asked me a question that I have already answered. I have already proposed that we shall keep the bomb until a new organization is built to which we have yielded our sovereignty in matters of security and other nations have done so. But I think that is preferable to giving the secret to an organization which is incomplete. I think while we have the bomb, we also have the means of persuasion. I want it to be used in a way to invite and create trust rather than the way we are using it now which is to create a certain amount of fear and dread.

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Swing, I think what the gentleman is driving at is are you in favor of creating the organization first and then turning the bomb over to it or turning the bomb over to the organization now and working toward the development of a stronger world organization?

*Mr. Swing:* Well, thank you, Mr. Denny. I had already said in my main statement I was in favor of our taking immediate steps to improve the organization and after the organization had been created then to turn the secret over to them. So I agree with him.

*Mr. Denny:* Yes. That's very good. I just wanted to get that perfectly clear. Now the lady there in the chartreuse dress. Yes?

*Lady:* My question is to Senator Brewster. How can we hope for a permanent peace by retaining this world shaking weapon between two nations?

*Senator Brewster:* Well, it is my thought that I have more confidence because of the record of America in world history in its use of this vast energy and power for the good of mankind than I have in sharing it with all the nations of the earth, because we'll be unable to discriminate. If we're going to give it to the United Nations, they all get it. And so if any single one in that should ever fall from grace, we would be faced with this problem. This idea is



not unique with me as I simply say what President Truman said, "We must constitute ourselves trustees of this new force to prevent its misuse and to turn it into the channels of service to mankind." I think that pledge from America with its history of a century and a half of nonaggression is the greatest assurance the peoples of the world can possibly have. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Senator. The man here?

*Man:* I address my question to Mr. Baldwin. Mr. Baldwin, I would like to know if the economic production and the financing of the bomb would give the control of the bomb to the United Nations?

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Baldwin? Well, I'm afraid I don't understand the import of it either. Let's have him repeat it and see if he can make it a little clearer to us.

*Man:* I mean that it cost a great deal of money, perhaps two billion dollars, and a great economic and industrial plant to build this bomb. The smaller nations could not spend the money and would not have the development, the economic development, or the factory to make such a bomb. Could we control that bomb in the United Nations League by that manner?

*Mr. Baldwin:* Well, of course, I think I can talk around your question. It's a tremendous prob-

lem. First of all, you've got to have some control over all the deposits of uranium in the world—pitchblende and other things from which uranium is derived. Those are scattered all over the earth. We don't know how much uranium material there is in Russia. We do know there is some in Czechoslovakia, some in Canada, some in the United States, and some in the Belgian Congo.

The United Nations organization would have to take control of that material. It would then have to presume to take over all the factories that we have built, and, literally, all of the industry of America has contributed to this bomb. It's not just the factories that are down in the south and in Oregon. It's the entire industrial nexus of America that has contributed.

So you see that is the giant problem that would be involved in having the United Nations manufacture and control the atomic bomb. It would in a real sense involve a financing problem and a sacrifice of sovereignty by all of the nations of the world.

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Baldwin. There are a number of distinguished guests here in our hall this evening. One of them is a man who probably knows more about this bomb than anybody else but who can't talk about it. I'm referring to a man who I want to present to this audience and let

the radio audience know that he's here. He's the man who took the idea from Mr. Einstein to President Roosevelt back in 1939.

Those of you who follow Raymond Swing's broadcast remember that he told this whole story on his broadcast. I'm speaking of Mr. Alexander Sachs, distinguished American economist who is up there in a box. Mr. Sachs, will you rise? Let us see you. (*Applause.*) Thank you very much, Mr. Sachs. We are sorry that we can't hear from you, but perhaps sometime we can.

Also, there are two distinguished American veterans in the audience. I'm going to ask them to give us a comment question if they care to—a former lieutenant in the infantry, now chairman of the American Veterans' Committee, Mr. Charles Guy Bolté. Mr. Bolté, have you a question? (*Applause.*)

Mr. Bolté: I'd like to ask Mr. Baldwin a question. You say, Mr. Baldwin, that we cannot hope to get any sort of world government until we have educated people to be internationally minded.

If you think back over history, I think you would probably find, as I do in thinking back, that what happened throughout history was that great attempts throughout the various religions, and so on, to raise the standards of human behavior were not always very successful by instilling new moral standards. What did happen was

that when police forces were instituted and a code of law was set forth in a nation, the citizens of the nation found they could live with a good deal more safety and security.

Now wouldn't you think that the same thing might hold true in international affairs and that the way to give the atomic bomb to the United Nations is to strengthen the organization so that it can, in fact, enforce the rule of law among the nations of the world? (*Applause.*)

Mr. Baldwin: I have no quarrel with that, Mr. Bolté. Nor have I any quarrel in principle with what either Edward Murrow or Raymond Swing is saying. I think we agree in principle but we differ very definitely and violently as to the time that may be required for this process. I for one will not be cast down or despondent if another war does assail the earth at some future time. I believe that man progresses. I believe that profoundly, but I believe that he progresses slowly, and it's the tendency of Americans in case of such set-backs in civilization to become impatient, to want to see the millennium in a day. I differ there with Mr. Swing; I agree heartily with all that Mr. Bolté has said. I'm all in favor of the United States taking the lead in trying to secure some law internationally. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Mr. Swing, do you want to comment on that?

*Mr. Swing:* Well, I heard my name being used there again. I just want to suggest that the dismay that Mr. Baldwin thinks he's not going to feel in case there's another war isn't in line with what he, himself, said. He did say earlier that he didn't believe this civilization would be destroyed, but what would happen was that we'd go back to the Dark Ages and man would be degraded. Well, I'll agree with him about that; everybody will. That's all the end of civilization means—the Dark Ages and man's degradation. It seems to me that he would be much more dismayed than he lets on at this present time. We haven't any time. We haven't the secret but for two to five years, and then the question is whether the bomb will be used, not whether we share the secret. One way to make sure that the bomb isn't used is to make sure there aren't wars. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. There's another veteran back there in the aisle who was assistant to Commander Stassen at San Francisco, a former lieutenant in the Marine Corps, and author of a lead article in the current *Atlantic*, "A Serviceman Looks at the Peace." He is Mr. Cord Meyer. Mr. Meyer. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Meyer:* Senator Brewster, I'd like to ask you a question. Your argument rests on the assumption that we can indefinitely keep the atomic secret. No scientist who had anything to do with its construction agrees with you. The custodianship idea is good, at best, for a very limited time. What do you propose, Mr. Brewster, when the imminent day comes when our knowledge is universal and everyone shares it—that we sit back and wait pending the maturing of the international organization, as you put it? Is it going to go all by itself, Mr. Brewster? We don't have a long time, Mr. Brewster, to establish government on a world level. To suggest that this government on a world level is impossible for a long time to come is to say, Mr. Brewster, that we are doomed and that there is nothing that we can do about it. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* I'd say that Mr. Cord Meyer is a good candidate for Town Meeting, wouldn't you, Senator?

*Senator Brewster:* Well, I certainly appreciate his contribution, and, fresh from the last war, even as he is from this, I was Executive Secretary of the League to Enforce Peace in the State of Maine, organized under the leadership of Root, Taft, and others, with this very objective in mind. I have never ceased to labor in every position of power that I have held



and in the Congress of the United States, a low and unregenerate Republican from Maine (*laughter*), I have voted consistently throughout the past ten years for every measure calculated to bring a better understanding among the nations in this great dream of a day of peace.

I am also conscious of the fact that there are many problems in our past. I'm conscious of the fact that we started a little experiment in this, ourselves, a century and a half ago with every hope of success, and yet, at the end of 75 years we fought the bloodiest civil war in all history to determine whether any nation so conceived and so dedicated could endure. So, perhaps, my youthful enthusiasm has been moderated with an observation of years. I recognize what the scientists say, but I recognize, also, that we have a four or five-year head start, that this is not static, but dynamic, that the two billion dollar engine that we have built, that the great team of scientists we have created are not going to stand still, but are going on in the evolution of this mighty weapon that has been born, and that we do have that as a trusteeship pending the day when the time of peace on earth shall really arrive. So I feel that America must recognize, as President Truman said, its trusteeship of this for the good of all mankind. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Senator Brewster. Any comments, Mr. Swing?

*Mr. Swing:* Yes, I've got a comment or two to make on that. It seems to me that Senator Brewster's impatience with mankind has taken only a few years to mature. He's still a young man and if he believed in peace after the last war, won't he rejoin the peace movement now and work for it in the sense that Mr. Murrow and I want it—that we now create a real security in the world. I want to add this idea, too, that the sovereignty that we are going to give up in this country and other countries are going to give up, isn't a sovereignty that the people lose. It will be the people in the world organization which will really have the sovereignty and who will really do the abolition of war.

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Swing's doing a very persuasive job on his opposition tonight—just inviting them over. All right, now, the young sailor back there. Yes?

*Sailor:* I have a question for Mr. Swing. I would like to know, as long as he puts such a great deal of alliance on this moral persuasion, whether he isn't thinking a little bit of the future more than the present. Where in European history has moral persuasion prevailed against the sword? The United Nations are predominately of European background. Let's go by the record. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Swing:* Well, I would say to that that the record shows that Europe set up a League of Nations at the end of the last war in the hope that wars might be stopped by collective action. While it was our idea, it was Europe which accepted it and we did not accept it. Even Europeans are people who don't like killing and don't like being killed. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. We can't have a good Town Meeting discussion on this question of an approach to world peace without having our good friend, Ely Culbertson, here, and there he is ready to put Senator Brewster on the spot.

*Mr. Culbertson:* My name is Ely Culbertson, and, like Senator Brewster, I am trying to build a bridge to peace. But Senator Brewster is not afraid of the atomic bomb. He lives in Maine. (*Laughter.*)

*Senator Brewster:* Come up and see me sometime.

*Mr. Culbertson:* We poor human beings—we live right here in New York City—and we are scared to death. Can I therefore ask the Senator to define once and for all exactly and specifically that beautiful little word “sovereignty?”

*Mr. Denny:* Senator, did you come with a definition of sovereignty in your pocket? (*Laughter.*)

*Senator Brewster:* Well, I read the Declaration of Independence

and to it I still subscribe. I won't repeat it here for this audience but I think it was fairly clear here in New York a good many years ago when we declared our independence for which we have fought several wars.

I think the American people know pretty well what we mean. I think we are quite ready to cooperate with all other peoples in all measures designed to keep the peace. But after the discussions at San Francisco and those now proceeding in London and the proposals that are pending by very potent nations, I think it is evident that the millennium has not yet arrived. I do believe that America is the greatest hope of peace throughout the century that is now ahead. That's why I want to keep our powder dry. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Culbertson wants to talk back there.

*Mr. Culbertson:* Can I ask once and for all, dear Senator, will you define that beautiful word “sovereignty” (*laughter*)—not generalities, but specific? (*Applause.*)

*Senator Burton:* When in the course of human events it becomes necessary for a people to assert among the nations their proper position, then it is incumbent upon them to state their reasons and America a century and a half ago declared its right to govern itself in a democratic form, and this, as Mr. Murrow just reminded me, is the only place in all the whole

wide world where anything like this could now go on. I ask you, are we ready to surrender the sovereignty of this country to the fifteen or twenty different kinds of dictatorships that now dominate the different nations of the earth? (*Shouts of "No" and applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you. Now we'll take this question from the gentleman there in the back. Yes?

*Man:* I wanted to address one to Raymond Swing, briefly. It is still a policing problem all over the world, and does Mr. Swing consider that Soviet Russia, once she has secured the secret of the atomic bomb—and all the speakers have agreed that eventually all nations will have it—that she will relinquish her insistence upon the veto power and Security Council setup?

*Mr. Denny:* Mr. Swing?

*Mr. Swing:* My answer to that is I don't know what the Soviet Union will do. I know that the Soviet Union is a federation and understands the federal principle. I believe the Soviet Union wants security. I'm sure the people of the Soviet Union want peace. At the present time, the Soviet Union sees us in possession of a weapon which we don't give to them, the secret of which we don't share with them. If people in the Soviet Union are now afraid of us and sense our using our power against them, then I think they are only acting as we would act in their place.

If, however, we made it clear to the Soviet Union that we do not oppose them with the atomic bomb, but will share it with the world organization which is to keep the peace for all of us, then I think the Soviet Union, being a federal state, is more likely to come in than not. They won't come in unless we do propose it. (*Applause.*)

*Mr. Denny:* Thank you, Raymond Swing, Senator Brewster, Ed Murrow, and Hanson Baldwin. It's hard to bring a discussion of this kind to a close and I know that a great many people all over the country, yes, and our men in the armed forces who hear this program in various parts of the world, and hospitals here at home, will carry on their own discussions of this baffling problem. Man is not going to give up readily once he's set out to do something as he's a very tenacious animal. And he's not going to give up readily on next week's topic, which I'll tell you about in just a moment as soon as our announcer tells you a brief, dramatic story of how a wrecked bomber carried a key to greater understanding between the United States and our ally, China.

*Announcer:* "A Bridge Between Free Peoples," is the title of an article on a recent back cover of *The Reader's Digest*. It's by a Belgian-born priest who has taught in China for more than seven years



and is now a naturalized Chinese citizen. He writes:

"While I was visiting a lonely mountain hamlet in northern China, the village barber invited me to occupy his brand new makeshift chair. It was the bombardier's seat of an American B-25. As he trimmed my hair, I heard an amazingly cosmopolitan conversation among the other villagers, none of whom had ever been beyond the nearest hill. One discussed an American farm program. Another spoke of an American patriot, Nathan Hale. A third chuckled over the strange cinema career of Mickey Rooney.

"I expressed my wonder at the extent of their knowledge to the village school teacher, a frosty bearded 80-year-old man who spoke English. His eyes twinkled as he admitted, 'I have been telling them all these things just from memory, you know, from pure memory. But, come, I'd like to take you to see the American flying chariot that was forced down here after dropping bombs over Japan. We like to look at it because it is a symbol, a bridge between our two peoples, and a token of the hopes of freedom loving people of all the world.'

"As we approached the fallen B-25, I saw lying beside it the cover of an old *Reader's Digest*. I read its list of titles, 'They Grow Their Own and Live Better'; 'Portrait of an American'; 'Alias Andy Hardy' — the very subjects that had been discussed by the Chinese villagers. I had found the secret of the remarkable memory of the old teacher. This plane that planted the seeds of death in Tokyo had planted the seeds

of knowledge in the mountains of China."

*The Reader's Digest* is now published in six languages, and is distributed in 53 countries. The editors of *The Reader's Digest* plan to add other foreign editions so that more and more *The Reader's Digest* will become a bridge between free peoples. Now, here again is Mr. Denny.

Mr. Denny: Well, neighbors, we still have some unfinished business with the Japs. Your sons, fathers, brothers helped to win the military victory but it's up to us and our Allies to see that it was not in vain. If this peace should turn out to be only an armistice, what a mockery we should have made of this victory.

So we invite you to join us next week when Brigadier General Carlos Romulo, Resident Commissioner of the Philippine Islands; Wilfred Fleisher, author and commentator; Royal Arch Gunnison, foreign correspondent and news analyst; and a fourth speaker to be announced, discuss the question, "How Can We Make a Lasting Peace With Japan?"

Announcer: Be sure to tune in next week when *The Reader's Digest* brings you Town Meeting. (Applause.)



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